

# Leaseholder Newsletter



Winter 2010

## Welcome



Welcome to the Winter issue of the Leaseholders Newsletter. This is the first issue produced by Homeownership since our move to our new premises at Coastal House. You can now contact us at:

Blackpool Coastal Housing  
Homeownership  
Coastal House  
17-19 Abingdon Street  
Blackpool  
FY1 1DG



Our telephone numbers and e-mail address remain unchanged.

We are in the process of upgrading our computer system which we use to manage tenant and leasehold accounts. If you have any questions or require further information about your account please contact us on 01253 477984 or 01253 477906 or e-mail [homeownership@bch.co.uk](mailto:homeownership@bch.co.uk)

## Satisfaction Survey Feedback

### Block Cleaning

The Satisfaction Survey showed that Leaseholders were concerned about the cleaning of the blocks and estates. The last issue of the newsletter gave you a breakdown of the charges made to Leaseholders for Grounds Maintenance which includes general tidying. This issue provides a breakdown of the average block cleaning charges. The cleaning contract only includes blocks which are 3 storey's high or more, therefore only Leaseholders in those blocks are charged in their service charges for the cleaning service they receive. The charge varies depending upon the frequency of the cleaning which can range from weekly, fortnightly or monthly (4 weekly) and depending on the block requirements.

The Block Cleaning charges made over the last 4 years:



2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11
61 Accounts	61 Accounts	71 Accounts	69 Accounts
£24.14	£24.14	£29.94	£35.12

Notice boards have been erected in some of the 3 storey blocks which carry information about the cleaning service and standards plus other estate issues, if they prove to be successful they will be rolled out to all our 3 storey blocks. Residents in these blocks are invited to volunteer to become Cleaning Wardens who will help monitor the cleaning standards. If you live in one of these blocks and are interested please contact Mr Ian Herbert, Contracts Manager on 01253 477587.

**To ensure all our services are accessible to all, documents are available in large print, Braille, on audio-cassette or computer disk upon request. We can also provide help for British Sign Language users and provide information in other languages.**

**For more information please contact 477900.**

## Satisfaction Survey Feedback

### Profiling - Knowing Your Customers

The profile information from the survey has shown that we have a number of elderly and disabled Leaseholders, so with this issue of the Newsletter we have enclosed information about Vitaline. Vitaline can provide help for people whatever their age who may need help and assistance to continue to live as independently as possible in their own home.

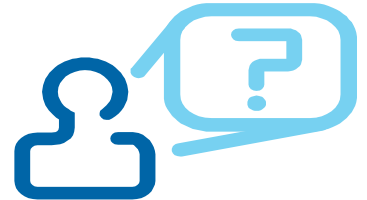
Their contact details are:

Blackpool Vitaline, Devonshire House  
307—309 Church Street

Blackpool  
FY1 3PF

Tel no: 01253 477600 or 01253 477678

E-mail: [info@vitaline.org.uk](mailto:info@vitaline.org.uk)



There may come a time when you decide you need to live in sheltered accommodation or move to a flat that has the services of a Scheme Manager. You can contact Blackpool Coastal Housing Homestop on 01253 477047 who can provide you with more information on the types of accommodation available. Please remember that until you sell the Lease of your flat you will still be responsible for paying the Service Charge invoices and maintaining all the obligations in the Lease.

## Fire Safety in Blocks—Impact on Leaseholders

The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (FSO) makes it a legal requirement for all communal and shared areas in blocks of flats to comply with the regulations.



What does this mean for you?

It means that any door which opens onto a communal hall or walkway must be certified to be fire safe, an ordinary UPVC door will not be legal if it opens onto communal areas. Any window which faces onto a communal area must be glazed with safety glass. So that your Landlord can comply with these requirements a programme of replacing or adapting flat doors is being planned. When your block is included in this programme of works you will receive a Section 20 Notice of Intention which tells you why we are doing the work, how much we estimate it will cost in your Service Charges and which contractor will be doing the works. If you wish to replace your door (or window) yourself, your lease states you must ask for Landlord Consent, therefore we will ask you to provide a copy of the door specification/guarantee which will be held on your Leasehold file and for the block Fire Service risk assessment which is available for inspection by the Fire Service.

Should we find that you have privately installed a door or window which fails to meet the Fire Safety Reform Act requirements Blackpool Coastal Housing will contact you and discuss your obligations to ensure block safety. We realise there are financial consequences for Leaseholders, however, the costs will only be charged after the statutory consultation period and on the next available invoice. Costs will be included with your Service Charges and payment arrangements can be made. The Fire Service will carry out a free fire safety inspection of your home and also fit free smoke alarms and can be arranged by contacting Homeownership on 01253 477984.



## Fire Safety in Blocks—Impact on Leaseholders

Blackpool Coastal Housing makes regular block inspections and is in the process of undertaking fire risk assessments on all blocks of flats. The Fire Service states that communal area's, corridors, hallways and staircases are classed as 'a means of escape in case of fire' and must be kept clear of obstructions and combustible materials.

Residents have made these area's look 'more homely' by placing furniture, carpets etc in communal area's. Unfortunately, new regulations mean that they must not be used to store any furniture, mobility scooters, bicycles, pushchairs, planters, door mats etc that could cause a hazard. If you need to dispose of any large items you can contact Blackpool Council Customer First on 01253 477477 and ask about Bulky Matters.



## Homeownership Service Improvement Panel

Meetings are held quarterly and the next one is scheduled for 12th January 2011, 3.30pm at Coastal House, 17-19 Abingdon Street. All Leaseholders are invited to attend and a proposed agenda will be sent out nearer the time. The minutes of the meeting are available to download from the Homeownership pages of the BCH website.

<http://www.bch.co.uk/leaseholdersRIB/Leaseholdershandbooknewsletterforums.htm>

We recognised that not all Leaseholders can attend meetings so an e-group has been set up for Leaseholders to receive the Service Improvement Panel documents and for their views and comments to be included in the meetings. If you have access to the internet and e mail and wish to join this group please contact: [homeownership@bch.co.uk](mailto:homeownership@bch.co.uk)

The objective of the Service Improvement Panel meetings is:

- 'to monitor the performance of BCH Homeownership and help identify and introduce value for money (VFM) improvements'
- Specific issues which affect your block or your estate can be raised at the meeting during "any other business" and will be referred to the appropriate service area with BCH
- Should you wish to discuss your own Leasehold account please contact Homeownership to arrange a private meeting



Performance against a selection of the Homeownership Service Standards for the first two quarters of the year is printed below:

	2009 -10 Performance	Qtr One April – June 2010	Qtr Two April – Sept. 2010	2010 -11 Target
Leaseholders involvement as % of Leasehold Accounts	7.50%	Not measured	7.75%	10%
Number of Right to Buy sales – Flats	0	0	2	100%
Number of lease assignments (private sales/transfers)	16	1	5	100%
Average annual service charge per leasehold account (not including ground rent or insurance)	£589	£288.56	£283.28	
% of service charges collected (fully paid or in credit)	82%	38.6%	43%	90%





## Useful Contact Numbers



For all Leasehold account queries and payments contact:

**Homeownership** 01253 477984 or email [homeownership@bch.co.uk](mailto:homeownership@bch.co.uk)

To report responsive repairs to your block contact:

**Repairs** (free phone) 0800 0730184 or email [repairs@bch.co.uk](mailto:repairs@bch.co.uk)

**Mereside Estate Office** 01253 477968

**Grange Park Estate Office** 01253 477969 Or email [yourtenancy@bch.co.uk](mailto:yourtenancy@bch.co.uk)

**Queens Park Estate Office** 01253 477971

If you have any comments about block cleaning or grounds maintenance please report this to your local Estate Office who will record your call and pass your comments to the contractors. If you have a garage or want to apply for a garage tenancy your local Estate Office will deal with these enquiries.

**Anti Social Behaviour** 01253 477968 or email [asb@bch.co.uk](mailto:asb@bch.co.uk)

For out of hours phone 0800 0730184

Blackpool Coastal Housing have a specialist team who deal with complaints of anti-social behaviour, they will listen to complaints and try to find a way to resolve issues.

**Customer Involvement** 01253 477911 or email [customerinvolvement@bch.co.uk](mailto:customerinvolvement@bch.co.uk)

If you wish to become more involved in improving the services we provide please contact Customer Involvement who have a wide range of opportunities available for everyone to get involved.

**BCH Board of Management & Senior Managers** 01253 477973 or 477988

Email [directors@bch.co.uk](mailto:directors@bch.co.uk)

Blackpool Coastal Housing have a board of 15 members, they and the BCH Senior Managers can be contacted through the Company Secretary or PA to the Chief Executive.

Further information about Blackpool Coastal Housing is available through our web site [www.bch.co.uk](http://www.bch.co.uk)

*Merry  
Christmas*

